Important Considerations

- Ensure minimum six inches of ventilation under deck substructure and required spacing between decking boards.
- Improve drainage or grade soil to eliminate standing water under decks.
- Direct downspouts, downspout extensions and splash guards away from decks.
- Position dryer vents away from decks.
- Maintain a deck that is dry and clean.
- Clean your deck as often as needed, at least twice each year.
- Use extreme caution with pressure washers and use at pressures less than 1,500 psi at 12" above deck surface. Pressure washing is not recommended when mold/mildew are present on the deck.
- Keep debris out of gaps between the decking boards so rain showers can remove pollen and organic debris between cleanings.
- Minimize the use of wet mulch up against the deck structure.
- Items stored directly on top of the deck surface, such as flower pots, prohibit water evaporation and can cause some staining on the deck surface.

Ventilation

Make sure there is adequate and unobstructed air flow under the deck to prevent excessive water absorption. Improve drainage or grade flat areas where standing water may gather. For decks with limited ventilation, six inches of clear ventilation is required between bottom of joists and fascia to grade.

Mind the Gap

If the gap between decking boards is less than 3/16", organic debris such as leaves, seeds or pollen can settle on the deck and clog gaps. Water can pool, steeping organic debris that forms a “tea” or of tannin which may stain your deck. This organic debris is a strong food source for mold. Keeping the gap clean is the easiest way to keep the deck clean. If gapping becomes clogged, use a garden hose, a spatula, putty knife or similar tool to remove debris.

Clean Your Deck

Clean your deck as often as needed, at least twice each year to remove pollen, organic debris, dirt or stains. Generally, a broom or a blower will work better than a hose for removing scattered organic materials like leaves. For general cleaning, use soap and water or mild household cleaners.

Masonry Construction

It is important to protect decking during masonry construction. White or hazy residue from mineral deposits (efflorescence) can leach out of stone and masonry materials after water evaporates leaving the deposits behind. Minerals from soils in certain arid and mountainous environments can also cause a hazing affect when deposited on the deck surface.

This can only be prevented with complete and secure coverage of the decking surface area during the construction phase or installation of the decking after the masonry construction phase. To minimize this affect during masonry construction, keep materials dry and allow masonry and cement to cure properly.

For mineral deposits left on the decking surface, periodic cleaning is required to maintain visual attractiveness. Fiberon developed Fiberon Composite Deck Cleaner specifically formulated for, and effective in cleaning dirt, clay, mud, soil, mineral deposits and masonry and stucco residue. Be sure to follow the label instructions. Do not mix recommended cleaning products together as harmful chemical reactions could occur.

Important Ladder Usage Safety Instructions

When using a ladder, place the ladder on a piece of ¾” plywood firmly secured to the deck surface to disperse the load of the ladder’s feet to nearby underlying joists. Drill fasteners downward through the top of the plywood sheet, into the deck board gaps and into the joists to keep the plywood from slipping. This avoids leaving holes in your decking once the plywood sheet is removed. Be sure to follow the ladder manufacturer’s instructions and safety tips.

Mold and Mildew

Mold and mildew are common environmental conditions. Molds grow on decaying organic material such as wood, leaf decay and pollen. Tiny and lightweight, mold spores travel easily through the air. Different climates experience varying degrees of these conditions depending on the amount of moisture and heat present.

To thrive, mold and mildew need air, water, elevated temperatures and a food source. There is no way to eliminate all these conditions in the environment. A wide variety of building materials including concrete, wood products, vinyl siding and many others are subject to potential mold growth.

To minimize mold on your decking, clean your deck as often as needed, at least twice each year. Climate conditions vary in different regions of the country and may necessitate more periodic cleaning. Removal of leaves, debris, and other organic materials that provide a food source for mold development is important. If mold is present on your deck, use soap and water to clean. For more information on cleaning mold and mildew, see Veranda Cleaning Mold Technical Bulletin at this link.

Dirt and Grime

Dislodge accumulated dirt with a broom or by using soap and water and a non-metal scrub brush. Scrubbing in the direction of the grain is best. Thoroughly rinse off with a garden hose. Skilled professionals may use a pressure washer with wide fan tips, at low pressures under 1,500 psi and at safe distances, 12” above deck. In the wrong hands, your composite deck can be damaged. Exercise extreme caution.

Oil and Grease Stains

Speedy clean up is best. To clean grease and oil stains that soap and water cannot remove, some all purpose cleaners, such as Fantastik, will cut through grease and grime. Or use a commercial deck cleaner designed specifically for your type of decking. De-Solv-It Citrus Solution is effective in removing tar, asphalt, oil, grease and chewing gum. Be sure to follow the manufacturer’s recommendations and test in an inconspicuous area prior to cleaning the entire deck.

Salt and Calcium Chloride

Build up of salt and calcium chloride from snow and ice removal is easily removed with enough water and perhaps a light scrub. Use a garden hose or sprayer. If using a pressure washer, use at low pressures under 1,500 psi and at safe distances, 12” above deck, to avoid damaging your deck. Never use METAL shovels or sharp edged tools to remove snow and ice on the surface of any Veranda ArmorGuard composite decking product.

Fire and Unusual Heat Sources

Composite decking will retain heat when exposed to direct or reflective sunlight. Exercise caution if walking barefoot as footwear may be required. Fire and unusual sources of heat and heat build-up can possibly damage Veranda ArmorGuard decking surfaces. Examples would include fire, reflected light from different types of glass (ex. low-e glass), fire features and under-deck waterproofing installations that do not provide the 6"(15 cm) of unobstructed net free ventilation.

- *Low-E Glass/Reflected Heat*

  Low-emissivity glass is designed to prevent heat gain inside the house by reflecting sunlight outward. This reflective property can result in excessive heat build on the surface of Veranda ArmorGuard decking. The properties that Low-E glass employs to prevent passive heat gain within a structure can result in unusual heat build-up on exterior surfaces.

  When the sunlight is reflected and concentrated it can harm a range of building materials that include doors, windows, siding, trim and decking. Damage caused to these products can include melting, sagging, warping, discoloration, increased expansion and contraction, and accelerated weathering.

  If you have questions on how to reduce this risk, contact the manufacturer of the product which contains the Low-E glass for suggestions on how to reduce or eliminate the reflected heat.

- *Under-deck waterproofing systems*

  Under-deck waterproofing systems, properly installed, can provide additional living or storage space. Improper installations are those that restrict air flow and result in build-up of heat and/or humidity which can result in unwanted consequences. Contact the manufacturer of the specific under-deck waterproofing system for installation instructions to ensure the required 6" (15 cm) of unobstructed ventilation is achieved for Veranda ArmorGuard decking. If already installed, seek methods to achieve the ventilation requirement.

- *Fire Features/Fire Pits*

  Fire features and fire pits are increasingly popular in outdoor living environments. Fire can damage many building products including Veranda ArmorGuard decking. Improperly installed fire features and fire pits can cause damage to the surface of Veranda ArmorGuard decking via direct exposure to the flame or excessive radiated heat. Proper caution should be taken when designing, installing and using these features to ensure damage does not result.

Static

Dry or windy environments may create a temporary condition of static electricity, which will vary depending on climate and site conditions.